

	ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER		Business Administration
	ANALYZING EMPLOYMENT INSECURITY AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG WOMEN GIG EDUCATORS: THE ROLE OF MEDIATING AND MODERATING MECHANISMS		KEY WORDS: Employment Insecurity, Job Satisfaction, Women Gig Educators, Work-Life Balance, Work Autonomy, Gig Economy
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ABSTRACT	The rapid growth of the gig economy has transformed employment patterns, particularly in the education sector where women increasingly engage as gig educators through digital platforms. Despite offering flexibility and autonomy, gig work is often characterized by employment insecurity, including unstable income, lack of long-term contracts, and limited organizational support. This study examines the impact of employment insecurity on job satisfaction among women gig educators, while also exploring the mediating roles of work-life balance, perceived organizational support, and psychological well-being, along with the moderating effect of work autonomy. A quantitative research design was adopted, and data were collected from women gig educators using a structured questionnaire. The study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the proposed relationships. The findings reveal that employment insecurity has a significant impact on job satisfaction. Among the mediating variables, work-life balance was found to significantly mediate the relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction, whereas perceived organizational support and psychological well-being did not demonstrate significant mediating effects. Furthermore, work autonomy was identified as a significant moderating variable, weakening the negative impact of employment insecurity on job satisfaction. The study contributes to the existing literature by integrating multiple mediating and moderating mechanisms within a single framework and focusing on an under-researched group—women gig educators. The findings offer practical implications for digital platforms and policymakers to enhance job satisfaction by improving work-life balance and promoting autonomy in gig work environments.		
INTRODUCTION	The growth of digital technologies has accelerated the expansion of the gig economy, transforming traditional employment structures across various sectors, including education. Women are increasingly participating as gig educators through online teaching platforms, freelance tutoring, and content creation. While this form of work offers flexibility and autonomy, it also introduces significant challenges, particularly in the form of employment insecurity. Employment insecurity refers to the perceived uncertainty regarding job continuity, income stability, and long-term career prospects. In gig-based work, this insecurity is heightened due to the absence of formal contracts, irregular work availability, and limited access to social security benefits. For women gig educators, these challenges are often intensified by additional responsibilities related to household and caregiving roles, making them more vulnerable to unstable working conditions. Job satisfaction, which reflects an individual's overall evaluation of their job, is a key determinant of well-being and performance. In the gig economy, job satisfaction is influenced by both positive factors such as flexibility and independence, and negative factors such as income unpredictability and lack of organizational support. High levels of employment insecurity can lead to stress and dissatisfaction, thereby affecting overall work outcomes. Although prior research has examined the relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction, limited attention has been given to the mechanisms through which this relationship operates, particularly in the context of women gig educators. This study addresses this gap by examining the mediating roles of work-life balance, perceived organizational support, and psychological well-being, along with the moderating role of work autonomy. By developing a comprehensive framework, this study aims to provide deeper insights into how employment insecurity affects job satisfaction and to identify key factors that can improve the work experiences of women in the gig education sector.		
	The rapid expansion of the gig economy has significantly transformed traditional employment relationships, particularly in the education sector where women increasingly participate as gig educators. While gig work offers flexibility and autonomy, it is often characterized by employment insecurity, irregular income, and limited organizational support. Employment insecurity refers to an individual's perception of uncertainty regarding job continuity and stability. According to Greenhalgh and Rosenblatt, job insecurity arises when individuals perceive threats to their job continuity and feel powerless to maintain desired employment conditions. In gig-based work, this insecurity is intensified due to short-term contracts, algorithmic management, and dependence on digital platforms (De Stefano, 2016). Job satisfaction, defined by Edwin A. Locke as a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job, is a critical outcome in organizational research. Previous studies consistently demonstrate a negative relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction, as uncertainty creates stress, anxiety, and reduced motivation (Sverke et al., 2002). This issue is particularly relevant for women gig educators, who often face additional challenges such as balancing professional responsibilities with domestic roles (Wood et al., 2019). The relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction can be explained through the Job Demands-Resources Model developed by Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti (2007). The JD-R model suggests that job demands, such as employment insecurity, lead to strain and burnout, whereas job resources enhance motivation and well-being. In this context, employment insecurity acts as a job demand that negatively influences job satisfaction, while resources such as work-life balance, organizational support, and autonomy serve as buffering mechanisms. Another important theoretical framework is the Conservation of Resources Theory proposed by Stevan E. Hobfoll (1989). This theory posits that individuals strive to acquire and protect valuable resources such as job stability, income, and psychological		
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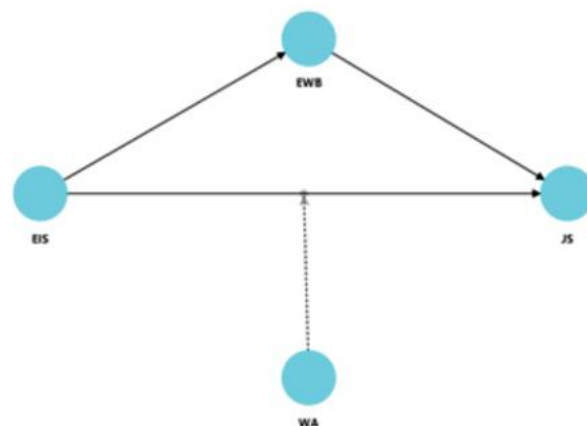
well-being. Employment insecurity represents a threat to these resources, leading to stress and dissatisfaction (Hobfoll, 1989). For women gig educators, the absence of stable income and long-term employment opportunities contributes to resource depletion, thereby reducing job satisfaction. The Social Exchange Theory introduced by Peter Blau (1964) further explains the role of perceived organizational support in shaping employee attitudes. According to this theory, employees reciprocate favorable treatment from their organization with positive attitudes and behaviors. When employees perceive high levels of support, they are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction (Eisenberger et al., 1986). However, in gig work environments, the lack of formal organizational structures often weakens this exchange relationship. Mediating variables provide insight into the mechanisms through which employment insecurity affects job satisfaction. Work-life balance is one of the most significant mediators, referring to the ability to manage professional and personal responsibilities effectively. Research indicates that employment insecurity disrupts work-life balance, leading to increased stress and reduced satisfaction (Guest, 2002). Although gig work offers flexibility, irregular schedules and workload unpredictability often create imbalance. Perceived organizational support is another key mediator, reflecting employees' beliefs about how much their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 1986). While high organizational support typically enhances job satisfaction, its role in gig settings is less pronounced due to limited interaction between workers and organizations (Kalleberg, 2009). Psychological well-being, which includes emotional stability and mental health, is also influenced by employment insecurity. Studies show that insecurity leads to anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and reduced well-being, which in turn negatively impacts job satisfaction (De Witte, 1999). However, empirical findings on its mediating role remain inconsistent, particularly in non-traditional work settings. In addition to mediating mechanisms, moderating variables such as work autonomy influence the strength of the relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction. Work autonomy refers to the degree of control employees have over their work tasks and schedules. Within the JD-R framework, autonomy is considered a key resource that reduces stress and enhances satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In the gig economy, higher autonomy allows workers to manage uncertainty more effectively, thereby mitigating the negative effects of employment insecurity. Empirical studies provide substantial support for these relationships. Research consistently finds a strong negative association between employment insecurity and job satisfaction (Sverke et al., 2002). Work-life balance has been identified as a significant mediator, while findings regarding perceived organizational support and psychological well-being vary across contexts. Similarly, work autonomy has been shown to buffer the adverse effects of insecurity, particularly in flexible work environments (Wood et al., 2019). In summary, the literature highlights that employment insecurity is a critical determinant of job satisfaction, especially in the gig economy. The integration of theoretical perspectives such as the JD-R model, Conservation of Resources theory, and Social Exchange theory provides a comprehensive understanding of this relationship. However, there is limited research focusing specifically on women gig educators and the combined effects of mediating and moderating mechanisms, thereby justifying the need for the present study.

Research Gap

Most existing research focuses on employment insecurity and job satisfaction in traditional work settings, while the experiences of women gig educators remain underexplored. Moreover, limited studies examine both mediating and

moderating factors together to explain this relationship in a comprehensive model.

Conceptual Model



Significant of Study

This study is significant as it examines the impact of employment insecurity on job satisfaction in the context of women gig educators, an area that is relatively underexplored. It contributes to theory by integrating mediating and moderating variables within a single framework, providing a deeper understanding of the relationship. The study offers insights for digital platforms and policymakers to improve working conditions by enhancing work-life balance and autonomy. It also highlights the challenges faced by women in gig work, supporting the development of more inclusive and supportive employment practices.

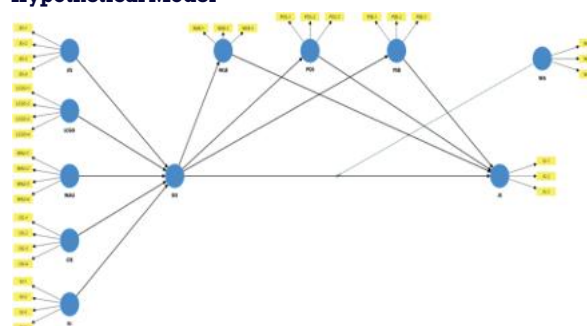
Objective

- To examine the impact of employment insecurity on job satisfaction among women gig educators.
- To analyze the mediating role of work-life balance, perceived organizational support, and psychological well-being in this relationship.
- To assess the moderating effect of work autonomy on the relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction.
- To develop and validate a comprehensive model explaining job satisfaction in the gig education context.

Hypotheses

H1	Employment Insecurity has a significant effect on Job Satisfaction.
H2	Work-Life Balance mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction.
H3	Perceived Organizational Support mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction.
H4	Psychological Well-being mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction.
H5	Work Autonomy moderates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction

Hypothetical Model



Research Methodology	
Area of Study	Gig Educators Women's Working in Academic Institutions of India
Sample Size	350 (Where as 305 responses received)
Research Design	Quantitative Research Design
Data Collection	Primary data were collected from women gig educators with the help of structured questionnaire. Secondary Data were collected from various sources like (journals, thesis etc.)
Sampling Technique	Convenience Techniques

Data Analysis

This study employed Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the data and test the proposed conceptual model. The analysis was conducted in two main stages: measurement model assessment and structural model assessment.

Measurement Model Assessment
Reliability Analysis (Construct Reliability)

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
CIS	0.986	0.986	0.989	0.959
EIS	0.967	0.968	0.979	0.939
IU	0.974	0.975	0.981	0.929
JIS	0.982	0.982	0.987	0.949
JS	0.965	0.966	0.977	0.935
LCGO	0.973	0.975	0.980	0.925
POS	0.982	0.982	0.988	0.965
PSB	0.972	0.973	0.982	0.948
WA	0.961	0.962	0.975	0.928
WAU	0.986	0.986	0.989	0.958
WLB	0.954	0.955	0.971	0.917

The reliability analysis confirmed strong internal consistency and validity of all constructs. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values were above the acceptable threshold of 0.70, while AVE values exceeded 0.50. These results indicate that the measurement model is highly reliable and suitable for further structural equation modeling analysis.

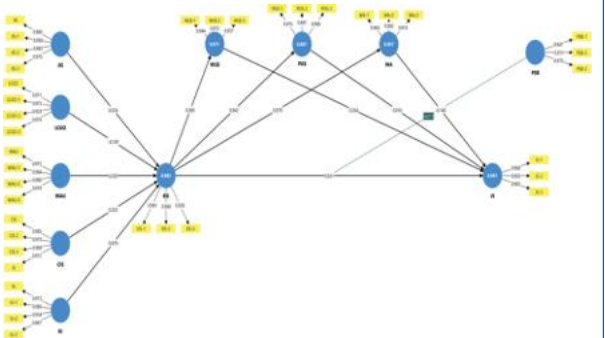
Discriminant Validity

	CIS	EIS	IU	JIS	JS	LC GO	POS	PSB	WA	WAU	WLB	Wx EIS
CIS												
EIS	0.702											
IU	0.696	0.719										
JIS	0.779	0.699	0.708									
JS	0.701	0.728	0.722	0.718								
LC GO	0.779	0.701	0.713	0.708	0.710							
POS	0.750	0.766	0.762	0.723	0.758	0.732						
PSB	0.691	0.698	0.697	0.673	0.701	0.717	0.796					
WA	0.698	0.711	0.701	0.712	0.705	0.717	0.714	0.718				
WAU	0.694	0.693	0.688	0.654	0.689	0.642	0.708	0.709	0.709			
WLB	0.706	0.725	0.719	0.702	0.727	0.702	0.713	0.710	0.694	0.699		
Wx EIS	0.714	0.756	0.718	0.687	0.719	0.794	0.765	0.756	0.740	0.729	0.729	

The discriminant validity results confirmed that all constructs were distinct from each other, indicating no multicollinearity

issues and ensuring the uniqueness and validity of each study variable.

Hypothetical Model



Hypothesis Testing
H₁ Employment Insecurity has a significant effect on Job Satisfaction.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Result
EIS -> JS	0.831	0.859	0.110	7.589	0.000	H1 Accepted

The hypothesis testing results showed that Employment Insecurity significantly influences Job Satisfaction among women gig educators. The path coefficient value (= 0.831) and p-value below 0.05 confirmed a strong and statistically significant relationship. Thus, H₁ was accepted, indicating that employment insecurity plays a major role in determining job satisfaction.

H₂ Work-Life Balance mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction.

H₃ Perceived Organizational Support mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction.

H₄ Psychological Well-being mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction.

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Result
EIS -> WLB -> JS	0.264	0.246	0.083	3.146	0.002	H2 Accepted
EIS -> POS -> JS	0.016	0.030	0.104	0.145	0.885	H3 Not Accepted
EIS -> WA -> JS	-0.140	-0.144	0.100	1.373	0.170	H4 Not Accepted

The mediation analysis revealed that Work-Life Balance significantly mediates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction. The significant p-value (0.002) confirmed that imbalance between professional and personal life caused by employment insecurity negatively affects job satisfaction. Therefore, H₂ was accepted, highlighting the importance of maintaining work-life balance in gig employment.

The data analysis indicated that Perceived Organizational Support did not significantly mediate the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction. The p-value of 0.885 exceeded the acceptable significance level, leading to the rejection of H₃. This suggests that organizational support has limited influence on reducing insecurity-related dissatisfaction among women gig educators.

The mediation effect of Psychological Well-being was found

to be statistically insignificant between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction. Since the p-value was greater than 0.05, H_4 was rejected. The results imply that psychological well-being does not significantly explain the relationship between employment insecurity and job satisfaction in the studied gig work environment.

H_5 Work Autonomy moderates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Result
PSB x EIS - > JS	0.017	0.018	0.009	1.796	0.003	H_5 Accepted

Work Autonomy significantly moderates the relationship between Employment Insecurity and Job Satisfaction ($p = 0.003$). Therefore, H_5 is accepted. This shows that higher autonomy reduces the negative impact of employment insecurity.

R Square

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
EIS	0.983	0.983
JS	0.991	0.990
POS	0.887	0.887
PSB	0.957	0.957
WLB	0.971	0.971

The R-square values indicated excellent explanatory power of the proposed model. The Job Satisfaction construct showed an R-square value of 0.991, meaning that 99.1% variation in job satisfaction was explained by the independent, mediating, and moderating variables. This confirms the strong predictive capability and effectiveness of the conceptual framework.

FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

The findings of the study reveal that employment insecurity has a strong and significant impact on job satisfaction among women gig educators, confirming its role as a critical determinant in gig-based employment contexts. The results align with existing literature, indicating that uncertainty related to job continuity and income stability leads to stress and reduced satisfaction. Supporting the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, employment insecurity acts as a job demand that negatively influences job satisfaction, while resources help buffer its effects. The study further identifies work-life balance as a significant mediating variable, demonstrating that employment insecurity affects job satisfaction indirectly by disrupting the balance between personal and professional life. This finding is consistent with prior research emphasizing the importance of balance in employee well-being. However, perceived organizational support and psychological well-being were found to be insignificant mediators, which contrasts with expectations from Social Exchange Theory and Conservation of Resources theory. This may be attributed to the nature of gig work, where organizational relationships are weak and workers may rely more on personal coping mechanisms than institutional support. Additionally, the moderating effect of work autonomy was found to be significant, indicating that greater control over work reduces the negative impact of employment insecurity. Overall, the findings highlight that while employment insecurity directly affects job satisfaction, its impact is better understood through specific mechanisms and contextual conditions, thereby addressing the identified research gap.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, it is recommended that digital education platforms and policymakers focus on improving work conditions for women gig educators by enhancing work-life balance and increasing work autonomy. Platforms

should design flexible yet structured schedules that allow individuals to manage both personal and professional responsibilities effectively. Increasing autonomy in task selection, scheduling, and workload management can help reduce the negative effects of employment insecurity. Although perceived organizational support was not found to be significant, efforts should still be made to strengthen communication, provide feedback mechanisms, and recognize contributions to improve overall engagement. Additionally, policymakers should introduce regulations ensuring minimum income stability, social security benefits, and protection for gig workers. Providing skill development and career growth opportunities can further reduce insecurity and improve job satisfaction. These measures can contribute to creating a more sustainable, supportive, and inclusive gig work environment.

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